Mortimer's Morris AGM - 8th Sept 2013

Held at St John's Church Hall, Bilborough. Meeting opened at 7.24pm.

Chair – Pat, minute taker – Chris.

Present: Chris, Celia, Fran, Gill, Linda, Mary, Pat, Sarah F, Sheila, Tanya, Vicky, Yvonne, Anthony, Chris L-J, Claire, Keith, Pete M.

Apologies: Kathryn, Victoria, Liz, Hazel, Alice C, Amelia, Hannah, Lauren, Sarah-Beth, Trevor and Eilidh.

Reports: Given by Squire, Band Organiser, Secretaries, Treasurer,Practice Leader and publicity Officer – all are attached.

Gifts for all retiring officers presented by Vicky during the squire's address.

Pat thanked all the committee members for their hard work throughout the last 12 months.

Election of Officers:

SQUIRE: Vicky is happy to continue. No other nominations.

BAND ORGANISER: – Claire – nominated by Keith, seconded by Chris L-J.

SECRETARY: – Liz - nominated in her absence by Chris, seconded by Vicky. Tanya volunteered to help with Googledocs and Sheila with feedback at practices on the evenings when Liz struggles to travel the distance to attend. Liz accepted the nomination.

TREASURER: Celia will continue as there are no other nominations

PRACTICE LEADER: – Pat and Yvonne jointly. - proposed by Chris, seconded by Vicky. There was one objection to this nomination, who left the meeting. The nomination was subsequently approved unanimously with one abstention.

PUBLICITY: There were no volunteers for this position. It was felt we may volunteer for individual jobs within the role and the discussion was deferred to when we talk about publicity later.

Non Committee Officers:

ARCHIVE OFFICERS: Yvonne to continue with paper version, John to relinquish the archive role. Tanya suggested a Flikr account that everyone can access to upload their own photos. Others wondered if our YouTube a/c would fit the bill, but it was though this would only hold videos (which Sarah Beth is uploading for us – see practice leader's report). Committee to follow up Flikr suggestion. Keith had electronic store of 500 of John Pomfret's photos which may be suitable for publicity.

KIT OFFICER: Gill happy to continue. Chris volunteered to help when needed. Gill is going to create a record book of who has what items, and will not issue kit items until she has received loan payments for them.

WEBSITE: Anthony reported that new website is up and running. Tanya, Keith and himself have worked hard with Martin to achieve this. It has a smart modern feel to it now. Only the public area of the website has be changed. You go to the bottom left hand corner of the home page and click "admin" to log onto the members area and access everything for members as before, including googledoc tick sheets.

The 3 photos on the right hand side of the home page scroll through a selection of 14 at present, changing each time you click on the page. More photos can easily be added to this selection, keeping the website updated. Please offer photos to the website committee. We still need a replacement for the old “tall” photo on the left hand side of home page. We can't find a high resolution photo that is suitable, so we need to take one. Sheila suggested a practice photo with us all wearing our black T-shirts. **Action.**

Pat proposed that we pay Martin a nominal £250 this year as a gesture of thanks for all his hard work. Carried unanimously by the meeting. - **Action Celia**

MORTIMER’S WEEKEND of DANCE 2014: Sarah and Tanya reported actions so far. 20th birthday to be celebrated **13th-15th June 2014.** They suggest a Sat dance out around Lincoln, after our experiences at Lincoln BIG morris yesterday, starting around the cathedral area, then moving down the hill to lunch at Weatherspoons on the riverside, (following great Weatherspoons lunch experience with Berkshire Bedlams w/e).

Sat evening the same caterer will provide 3 large pots with jacket spuds and salads buffet style as per Hoxon Hundred's w/e to simplify catering. Lincoln council is happy to support us dancing and Sarah has met Diane Booth, organiser of Lincoln BIG morris who will help where necessary.

Newark Council are keen for us to dance there on the Sunday. The hall at North Muskham is available to be booked at 2013 rates, if we want above dates. A show of hands was taken – everyone present happy with those dates so **Action – Tanya to book hall.**

Pat volunteered to run the books on the financial side for the weekend.

Need to start invitations – can everyone send suggestions to Tanya of sides they would like inviting, she will set a cut off date. - **Action everyone.**

Vicky wondered if we would invite local sides on the Sunday – to be considered nearer the time when we've had replies.

Pat thanked Tanya and Sarah for all their hard work.

STRATEGY: Vicky – We need to check if we have a side available before targeting festivals to avoid being blacklisted. Sheila said it's really too late to target 2014 festivals we should be asking about 2015 now. Mary reminded us that we used to have a planning meeting to discuss next year's bookings soon after the AGM which seemed to work. **Action all -** Agreed to hold this at **evening practice on 22nd September**, if you can't make it send suggestions to the committee before then for discussion on the night. Chris will bring all current invitations and Hannah can tell us about the Greenbelt festival at Cheltenham racecourse. Committee can the follow up on recommendations at their first committee meeting.

Calendar dates: Vicky said advance bookings of christmas parties, day practices etc. to be done as soon as, to reserve dates in everyone's diaries. This can also be done at the meeting on 22nd September.

RECRUITMENT: Keith - Any specific days to be planned? Vicky suggested it should be on-going. Chris LJ - Ruth's poster at the university has already received interest from a musician (see her report) he will forward it to everyone for use elsewhere NB. Needs to ask for dancers as well as musicians – **Action Chris LJ.** Need to leave recruitment days till October to give time for advertising.

Can anyone attend fresher's week like Carole did a few years ago?

Anthony volunteered to put advertisement on our facebook page **– Action Chris P** to send link.

PUBLICITY: Beer mats are cheap and easy to obtain (Vicky). Claire gets them for Poppy folk club with logo on front and dates on back. Kathryn had some details last year. **Action – Kathryn and Claire** to research sources and inform committee. Vicky – Morris Fed newsletter very cheap to place advert in. Chris P – writing an article is free! **Action -Vicky happy to write one.** Anthony – local newspapers also very cheap to advertise in for local recruitment. CP suggested Ruth might write an article about the "stuff of life festival" for local newspaper with photo (or get reporter to come and do it!) **Action - Chris LJ** to ask her. Tanya said Vistaprint do lots of freebies – thats where she gets the postcards and her & Vicky's bags come from. Could all the side have their own "named Mortimer's bag" for danceouts? - everyone keep eyes peeled for Vistaprint adverts and order their own. Tanya can advise.

Umbrellas. Tanya had been approached at Southwell Folk Festival re: printed umbellas. She got quotes as side had mentioned them at wet procession last year. Small brollies £13.95, Golf brollies £16.95. Some golf brollies a good idea for the band. Limited by carriability – could they fit in stick trolley as musicians unable to carry any more gear? **Action** - Agreed to purchase 3 or 4.

KIT: Yvonne – Could we trial having our own pair of sticks to be responsible for, instead of having large trolley to hump round (c.f. Silkstone's)? Only feasible for large sticks as we don't have enough of Whitby's and slings. Celia explained Silkstone's take the sticks to hand out at start of day and collect them in at the end. If anyone forgets them they buy everyone a drink! **Action -** Agreed to trial it at Stuff of life festival.

CP – sticks need refurbishment, gold tape peeling off again. Anyone any suggestions for more permanent decoration? **Chris LJ** suggested a painted stick. **Action** – he will make a prototype. Sarah, Tanya, Mary and Chris P volunteered to run a workshop over the winter to refurb as decided.

Skirt length: Gill – we need to standardise skirt length. If everyone brings them to a day practice, skirts can be tried and measured to see what needs doing, Chris and Gill can help with shortening if needed. **Action – all dancers** bring skirts to October 20th day practice.

Chris P has obtained 40 original design skirt buttons, but smaller diameter so button hole will need reducing. Ask if you need some. Handbook says we should all have matching skirt buttons.

Vicky fed back on skirt replacement from last year's AGM. Need a standard pattern to produce 30 like skirts of differing sizes. Having trouble finding one. Also reticent to sew 30 skirts if no-one that bothered, which judging from feedback few are.

Pat – Should all neck wear be beads, which is traditional for NW? Handbook says "Beads/necklaces/earrings of your choice in kit co-ordinated colours". Sheila has been wearing a necklace with feathers for ages. Lots of people said they liked variability. Yvonne – standardised T-shirts are more important – they should be V-necked (not round) with 3/4 sleeves (not long). Chris LJ said artistically all kit should have stylistic unity. T shirts, waistcoats and skirts should be uniform or it is no longer a kit. Variability on adornments not so important eg. Jewellery, hair adornments. CP said at committee meeting 7/11/12 it was decided that "Hair adornments to be of kit colour and shade and discreet in accordance with handbook "subtlety is the key", though at some events "more is more" eg. Christmas at the Vic. **If in doubt speak to the squire**." This should apply to neck wear too.

KEYHOLDERS / BUDDY ARRANGEMENTS: Mary -We have a rota for keyholders but it doesn't seem to be monitored. Agreed that Keith would unlock and Chris would lock up. If they're not available they would find cover. Mary also has a key and is happy to help.

Buddies not really needed now as no-one is new. Committee will arrange them when and if needed.

SUBS: - Celia says they're fine at £40 per year, no need to increase them. Can people please pay them annually or bi-annually if at all possible, and try to pay up front so she doesn't have to chase around for them.

MORRIS FED MAGAZINE: Always available at practice for borrowing. Keith reminded everyone that its available online to everyone too.

BAND AUTONOMY: Chris P asked if this was still needed? Many people had been surprised when the band suddenly announced a new kit at practice and yet neither the dancers nor the committee had had any inkling it was under discussion. Should the band communicate a little more with the dancers, is there a reason for wanting autonomy?

Keith explained the autonomy was historical from very early in the sides life, and had something to do with performing externally as a separate band. CP asked if the band still wanted it. Peter M said he did. Claire said the band would discuss it but would endeavour to be more communicative in future.

COMMITTEE'S REMIT: Sheila said she wondered where the committee's brief started and ended? Should all their decisions be put back to the side? CP - no guidance in handbook. Yvonne – committee meetings were only started so officers could talk to each other as they didn't seem to be communicating very much in the past.

Vicky said the new committee should be wary of making formulaic decisions. Recommendations should be put back to the side.

AUDIENCES: Sheila wanted us all to be aware not to use space that the audience might need to use, eg. Don't dump bags on tables where they might like to sit / stand to watch performances. Tanya and Sarah both said we should be more aware of sides we perform with and watch and cheer them. We are all guilty of planning the next dance without watching others perform which is rude.

Any Other Business:

Tanya asked if the committee would consider that any booked event places need to be paid for even if you drop out for some reason. It was confirmed that this rule had always applied, Vicky has asked Celia for a list of none payers from last year which she will follow up. The side should not be losing money in this way.

Celia asked for dates of the next few practices so she could book the hall. The following was decided:

September: 15th daytime, 22nd pm(planning meeting), 29th pm

October: 6th off, 13th off (Pigfest), 20th daytime (bring skirts!), 27th pm

November: 3rd off, 10th pm, 17th daytime, 24th pm

December: 1st off?(to be decided), 8th pm, 15th day

Pat was thanked for chairing such a busy meeting.

Meeting closed 10.20pm(ish).